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THE
REPORT
OF THE
ANNUAL EXAMINATION
OF THE
PUBLIC SCHOOLS
OF THE
CITY OF BOSTON.

1853.



BOSTON:
1853.

J. H. EASTBURN, CITY PRINTER.

CITY OF BOSTON.

In School Committee, February 1st, 1853.

Messrs. Bates, Russell, King, Skinner, Kent, Norcross, Dexter, Cooke and Porter, were appointed a Committee to make the Annual Examinations of all the Grammar and Writing Schools, under the charge of the Board, for the present year.

Attest:

BARNARD CAPEN, *Secretary.*

In School Committee, Sept. 13th, 1853.

Voted—That the Committee to make the Annual Examinations, be authorized to report in print.

Attest:

BARNARD CAPEN, *Secretary.*

In School Committee, November 1st, 1853.

Mr. Bates, Chairman of the Committee to make the Annual Examinations, presented the Report of said Committee, which was accepted; and, thereupon, it was

Ordered, That the usual number—twelve thousand copies—be printed for distribution.

Attest:

BARNARD CAPEN, *Secretary.*

REPORT.

The City of Boston appropriates yearly, about \$330,000 for the support of Public Schools. It has invested in school houses, about \$1,500,000. The whole amount of money raised yearly, by taxation, for all its expenses, is about \$1,200,000. Subtracting from this amount the \$330,000 appropriated to educational purposes, it leaves about \$870,000 to meet all the other expenses of the City, comprehending the salaries of all the City officers, the cost of paving and laying out of streets, the expenditures for police regulations, the expenses of maintaining all the public buildings, criminal and charitable, the jail, the institutions at South Boston and in the Harbor, all the current expenses attending the distribution of water in the City, the lighting of the streets, the care of the Common, the Public Garden, the unproductive land owned by the City, the City property generally, and everything that must necessarily be expended in providing for the health, comfort and security of its citizens, and the reputation and honor of its own name among the cities of our land.

Our school houses are built at great expense. Those who have had the charge of their erection, have thought only, how could they best combine convenience, comfort, healthfulness and attractiveness. The furniture, the philosophical apparatus, the globes and maps

are all of the most approved kind, and nothing is asked of the City Government, which is really conducive to the welfare of our Schools, that is not readily granted.

More than one quarter of the whole tax of the City is appropriated to Schools. The valuation of the City for the year 1852-3, was some \$188,000.000. The amount taxed upon every dollar of property for education, was therefore some two mills. The population of Boston in the year 1852-3, was nearly 150,000, and if the amount appropriated to Schools was raised *per capita*, the portion of every man, woman and child, would be about two dollars. The number of voters in Boston is about 22,500. If this amount was divided among them, each poll would pay about fourteen dollars. The average number of pupils in our Schools is not far from 23,000. The yearly cost of educating each child is therefore about fifteen dollars.

And though in this City, as elsewhere, we frequently hear complaints of excessive taxation, it is rare indeed to hear any wish expressed, that a less amount should be raised for educational purposes, than is necessary to carry out fully, all judicious plans for the welfare and improvement of our Common Schools. To be sure there may be found among us, as almost everywhere, some men of contracted minds, who are willing to enjoy all the blessings and comforts, which are afforded to our citizens, by the judicious appropriations of the amount raised by taxation, and yet unwilling to share, out of their abundance, the equal, legitimate quota of tax due from them, as representatives of the property in their possession; and who, at the annual approach of our assessors, steal away like thieves in the night, to some region, where, by special contract, they may buy for themselves, such a residence as will satisfy the technicalities of the law, and return only in the sunshine of our prosperity, when their fear

is over, to enjoy advantages which they have contributed nothing to produce, and to participate in the privileges which obtain from the united sacrifice of the poor, the men of moderate means, and the liberal, whole-souled rich of our City.

As so large a portion of the money raised by taxation in our City, is appropriated to School purposes, and as complaint is sometimes made of the expensiveness of our School system, and also the right to make certain appropriations questioned, we have deemed it not out of place to consider, briefly, the relation which Government and individuals respectively sustain towards property, and consequently, their respective rights and duties in relation to taxation.

TAXATION.

The excuses made by many of those, who contrive to avoid their legitimate taxes, that under any circumstances they pay a larger tax than many of their fellow citizens, or, that they are not in favor of certain expenditures for which taxes are laid, and consequently are not acting immorally in avoiding the payment of their tax, are fallacious and founded on a wrong theory of the relation, which they and their property sustain towards government.

Taxes are based upon property, not upon persons. The earth, its products and everything valuable upon it, belong, in a certain sense, to all mankind, and every one is entitled to their benefits. We brought nothing into the world, and we can carry nothing out of it; and it is not in accordance with any absolute or natural right, but only in compliance with the arbitrary rules of society, that the will of the dead man should be regarded, respecting the distribution of property, his in life, but after his death, belonging to

those, who then inhabit the earth. In a certain sense, the old Feudal doctrine is correct, that Government,—that is, the representative of mankind as a body,—holds the fee of all property. It is to avoid the dissensions incident to the transmission of property without fixed rules, that the general assent of society is given to the arbitrary laws, which obtain in regard to the unequal division of property among men, its distribution at the death of its holder, and, under certain conditions, its escheat to the government. Government is established, among other things, for the protection of property, and the security of those who hold it, in accordance with established law; and it is this property, wherever and however held, that must pay the expenses of its own protection.

Thus far Government has a lien upon all property within its jurisdiction. Whether held by feudal tenure and distributed by Government, among the people, by feudal laws,—whether held entirely in the hand of one man,—whether distributed equally and yearly among all mankind by agrarian law, or held, as among us, in unequal amounts, by arbitrary law, it is still held subject to this lien. It is not the man that is taxed, but the property; and the holder pays the tax, by the same general law that enables him to be the holder of the property thus taxed, and which secures to him its peaceful possession and uninterrupted enjoyment. The property is only his, minus its legitimate tax; and he who defrauds Government of its tax, retains that, which is not his own, and appropriates to his own use that, which legally and justly belongs to the public. Government must be the judge of its own necessities. And where, as with us, Government is the expression of the public will, the holder of one dollar of property, has as much right to say, what are the

necessities of Government, and consequently what shall be the public tax, as he, who has millions at his control. And no one, whatever may be his private opinion of the expediency of a special tax, has any right to withdraw the property in his possession from taxation, which has been appointed by the will of the people; for to this extent that property belongs to government.

To those few, therefore, who, for whatever reasons may influence them, prefer for their children private to public instruction, and who murmur at the amounts appropriated for Common Schools, it is the right of our community to say, we are to judge of the public necessity, and for this purpose and to this extent, your property is our property.

The number, however, who find fault with our school appropriations is comparatively small, and their grievance would often, in their own estimation, be as great and their complaints as loud, at any appropriation whatever. They are the exceptions. As a general rule all our citizens respond cheerfully to all, that is deemed needful in the furtherance of the prosperity of our Common School Institutions.

We have, in our community, many noble-minded men, who feel that their wealth is given to them as a trust for their fellow citizens, to be appropriated, not in pandering to their own ambition, sensuous appetites and grovelling desires, but in ameliorating the condition, providing for the wants, and securing the prosperity and happiness of those around them, less favored than themselves, in the good things of earth; and who, besides cheerfully using their influence in the administration of the government to secure proper appropriations for our Schools, are privately and unostentatiously conferring lasting benefits upon successive generations, by their generous gifts of valuable libraries to our Schools.

SCHOOL SYSTEM.

But what is this School System that thus drains our City Treasury of more than one quarter of its yearly income, that demands so large tax upon every voter within our limit, and yet that receives the support of the wisest, shrewdest, and most philanthropic men of our city? In many cases, those, who have the most important voice in determining the amount of the appropriations for its support, appear to have little or no *direct* interest in its establishment or continuance. Is it not an anomaly to see such men striving for such a purpose, when it is from the property held by them, that so large a portion of the appropriation is to be drawn? Whatever may be the nature of men in other respects, it is undeniably true, that as to all that affects their pockets, they expect a *quid pro quo*. It is important, therefore, for every voter to make certain inquiries. Are our School Appropriations judicious. Are the advantages obtained, equal to the outlay required? What does our School System accomplish? What are the benefits received? What are the evils forestalled? Can these large appropriations be dispensed with, in safety to our own best interests? What is the relation that these Schools bear to the Government? And in reference to this relation, what should be their aim, conduct and destiny?

Our Schools are of different grades. The Latin School for boys, averaging about two hundred pupils, is designed to give to all who attend it, such an education as will fit them to enter any College in our land.

The English High School, averaging about two hundred pupils, is designed to give to those who have perfected themselves in our Grammar School studies, such an education in Moral and Intellectual

Philosophy, Logic, Chemistry, the higher branches of Mathematics, and the French and Spanish languages, as will enable them to take a commanding position in the commercial and mercantile world, or to act as master mechanics, or as civil engineers.

The Normal School, averaging about one hundred and seventy-five pupils, is designed to give to the girls, who have been graduated at the Grammar Schools, such an education as will enable them to act efficiently, as assistant teachers in our Grammar and Primary Schools.

Our Grammar Schools, twenty in number, and averaging over five hundred pupils, between the ages of eight and fifteen, are designed to give to all the children in our city such an education in all the necessary branches of study, as will enable them intelligently to act their part in life, as common-sense, well informed and patriotic citizens.

Our Primary Schools, one hundred and ninety-five in number, and averaging each about fifty pupils, between the ages of four and eight, while they are attended by the children of our most respectable citizens, are also designed to provide a place for those thousands of children in this city, whose parents, engaged in manual labor, would often otherwise be obliged to leave them to wander in the streets, acquiring habits of vagrancy, idleness and vice, which would probably continue to affect them through life; and to give to them such an education, moral and intellectual, as will fit them to enter the Grammar Schools, when they shall have reached the proper age. These Schools are free to all, and are about equally attended by the children of the poorest of our foreign population, and those of our richest citizens and most honored statesmen.

Side by side, engaged in a common cause, equally interested in the same studies listening to the same moral

instructions from those, whom they love and respect, treated as equals, promoted or degraded only according to their diligence or negligence, forming friendships, and insensibly studying human nature in all its phases, sit children representing the extremes of society, — those who, in a few years, are to take our places in the world, some with wealth and position given to them, others poor and unknown, with nothing but the instruction, discipline and experience, which the school affords.

It is often said, "that one-half the world know not how the other half live." Did they know, charity would not be the rare virtue she is. What is more advisable in a land like ours, where worth, not birth, makes nobility, and where the changes are so sudden that the son of a common laborer may attain to the highest offices in the gift of the people, and yet his descendants become the inmates of an almshouse, than that all the members of our community should become more or less acquainted with the manner of life, the modes of thought, and the peculiar characteristics of those who compose the various grades of our society? And what less objectionable method is there of acquiring this information, than by the intercourse, which obtains in our schools, guarded as it is by the watchfulness of committees, teachers and parents. May we not attribute, in a great degree, the general good feeling and absence of envy, which obtains among the different grades of society in our city, to the early impressions received at school; and is not the interest which is entertained for their prosperity, alike by the rich and the poor, an evidence of the universality of these impressions?

What is it that has given our land its pre-eminence among the nations of the earth? It does not result wholly from its free form of government, the great fertility

of its soil, and its abundant resources. These, indeed, are all motive forces, but the great leading power is the universality of education among us, and the proportion of intelligent, thinking, working minds. There are constantly presented to the public, practical illustrations of the advantages which educated labor possesses over those mechanical processes, through which ignorance works, in the beaten track which antiquity laid; and of the widely different result of the work of a thinking, practical man, and of one "who whistles as he *works* for want of thought." How frequently have our common workmen devised simple methods of reducing to useful practice what scientific men have demonstrated, with mathematical accuracy, to be practically impossible. Our Patent Office abounds in useful inventions, and by far the greater part of them are the workmanship of those whose education, save as pursued by themselves, was received at the Common Schools.

What is it that causes the proportion of crime committed by our native citizens, in comparison with that committed by our foreign population, and of our whole people in comparison with other nations, to be so small. Why is it, that, in comparison with the nations of Europe, so small a proportion of our population are paupers, if it is not attributable to our Schools? What is it, that when political parties have raged in their bitterness, when theoretical disorganizers have inflamed the public mind, when dissension, radicalism, fourierism, agrarianism, and a thousand impracticable theories for the amelioration of mankind, and the reorganization of society upon a new basis, all promising to make earth heaven, favored often by men of talent, and preached with all the earnestness and enthusiasm of the conscientious but misdirected reformer—what is

it, that disappoints the fears of our good timid conservatives, who, thinking only of ancient republics and the character of their population, prophecy at every new public excitement, our speedy overthrow, but the practical, educated, common-sense of the great mass of the untalking people, who, at the proper time, receive the good which these excitements create, quietly reject the attendant folly and wickedness, and leave the effervescence to work itself off again, in some new theory, or in the revival of some long exploded notion.

The very commonness of our schools prevents our realizing, to the full extent, the blessings they afford us, the grandeur of the thought that originated them, and the wisdom of their perpetuation. We may gaze upon the rose bud when the heating sun pours its rays upon it, and the dews and gentle rains water it, but the closest watching eye cannot detect its imperceptible expansions; and yet, under these influences, it soon blossoms into the full blown rose. Thus of our schools, by their fruits must we know them. Out of our own land, nothing is found to compare with them. Ancient history is as silent as modern respecting them. With what enthusiasm would Socrates and Cicero have viewed them; a new leaf would have been added to the *Memorabilia*, and a new chapter to the *De Officiis*.

THE RELATION OF OUR SCHOOLS TO THE GOVERNMENT.

We do not at all fully realize the peculiar and intimate relation which our Public Schools sustain to the Government. Private Schools and incorporated Academies have a special office to perform. They are dissenters from the regular system. Their administration and Government is subject to the private will of individuals. The Government has nothing to do with

them, except in their toleration. The relation of their teachers to their pupils and their parents is different from that in the Public Schools, and is to be settled by common law, applicable to other nations as well as our own. But our Public School System is a branch of the Government itself; as much so as are our courts, our police, criminal, and charitable regulations for the poor. It is School and State; so it has been since its establishment, and so it must be while it exists. The distinction between private and public schools is constantly growing greater and greater, and the Government, by its general and special laws, is assuming yearly more and more power in its administration over the latter. Before, however, our Schools accomplish all they are designed, and we believe destined to accomplish, this relation must be more definitely recognized by legal decisions, and more universally understood by our citizens.

Those stern and determined men, who, in the dark cabin of the Mayflower, thought out, in their strong minds, and laid down, with an inflexible will, the plan of action which was to be their guide, in carrying into successful operation the principles, which they had left their own land to maintain, knew full well that liberty could not exist without intelligence; that it was not safe to trust education to individual effort; but that the Government, if it would sustain itself, must see to it, even by compulsory measures, that the means of education were provided for the whole people. They, therefore, inwove into the texture of our Constitution, School and State, providing that all property should be taxed for general education, as well as for sustaining the other necessary branches of the Government; and though their descendants have separated Church and State, and have rescinded the laws requiring all property to be

taxed for the support of Religion, they have sustained fully the compulsory laws for Schools, making them more definite, as the exigencies of the times required, by specific statutes, by affixing penalties, by giving the power to take private property for school purposes, and more recently, by asserting the power of Government over individuals, in the passage of its truant laws.

This connection between Government and our School System must have an important weight in settling many of the mooted points respecting the general administration of our system. Governments to be effective must be stable. Their first aim must be to preserve their own existence. Of necessity, every thing else must be secondary to this. Their whole administration must tend directly to their own perpetuation, and all their plans of operation, in every branch, must be directed accordingly.

The first object and aim of our Government, therefore, in establishing and maintaining its School System, is its own preservation. If this system is not necessary to preserve our form of Government in its purity, then it may be dispensed with; if it is necessary, then has Government the right, so long as it exists by the will of the governed, to sustain the system, and to devise and to carry into operation all such measures as will give it efficiency and completeness. Governments, whether good or bad, while they exist as Governments, can acknowledge nothing superior to themselves, and, until they are changed by a peaceful or a violent revolution, all their administration must be in sympathy with their general aim. So far as Education has ever been under the direction of the State, we find that it has been conducted in strict subservience to the purposes of Government. For example, the education of the Spartans, in the time of Lycurgus, was a

State education ; all the children in the State were taken away from their parents at an early age ; those who were physically weak were destroyed, and the remainder were sent to the public institutions, to be trained entirely by the appointed teachers. Patriotism was the god of Sparta. Its sole aim was, to preserve its independence by valor in arms. The individual was merged in the community, hardly seeming to have a separate existence. The Government accomplished its purpose ; and it was only by means of the discipline received from the schools, that the small State of Sparta was enabled so long to stand, defying the more powerful nations around. No better instance could be imagined of the efficiency of State Education to produce a particular given result, than this. The error was, that the end of the Government itself was not right.

The education of the people of Prussia and of Holland fails of producing what we should call satisfactory results, because the very object itself of the education, is merely to train up obedient subjects to monarchs ; and while, therefore, varied valuable instruction upon certain sciences is given, that discipline of mind and that freedom of thought, which is necessary to produce the highest style of man, is almost wholly neglected. Indeed, it follows, as a natural consequence, that no nation having a form of Government different from ours can have the same State system of education ; and in our own country, Government and Education must ever be, in turn, both the cause and the consequent of the condition and progress, each of the other.

The object and aim of our Government in the administration of its School System is simply this, — to train up all the children, within its jurisdiction, to be intelligent, virtuous, patriotic, American citizens. We say citizens ; for it is only with man's relation to the State,

that the Government has anything to do. With his relation to God, with the duty which he may owe to himself, to cultivate in a specific manner special talents, which he may possess, Government has no right, and does not intend, to interfere. It taxes the property of all, for the benefit of all. It is not man, the individual, but man, in his relation to his fellow-men, that it educates. To be sure our form of Government is such, that the surest way to make a free citizen, is to provide such an education as will make men, in the strongest sense of the term — men, pure in heart, strong in mind, healthy in body, wise as rulers, and obedient as citizens. Yet, after all, the inquiry of Government must simply be, how it can best make *citizens*. It is not its object to make religionists, of this or that sect. It has among its citizens, all of whom have equal rights, members of every denomination. It cannot favor political creeds, social theories, or private prejudices. Its legislation must be for the whole, not for any part.

Neither is our Common School System designed to give special instruction, in order to fit children for any special department in life, but rather to give that kind and amount of moral, physical, and intellectual instruction, that discipline of mind, that freedom of thought, those habits of deep practical investigation, that self-reliance, that ready energy, and that patriotic love for their country and her institutions, which will make them living, acting, practical, common-sense citizens — men who know their own rights, but also understand the rights of others, and the relation they sustain to Government and to their fellow-citizens.

POWER OF GOVERNMENT IN THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE SCHOOL SYSTEM.

If this is indeed the relation which exists between School and State, it becomes important for committees and teachers to consider, what are their respective rights and duties. One of the most important objects of our Schools, is the forestallment of crime, by bringing the minds of the children under proper influences, before they have become contaminated with vice, and the employment of those preventives, and the infliction of those punishments, which are necessary to restrain erring children, in their first attempts at insubordination and crime. Our courts, and their various classes of officers, have jurisdiction, when crime is brought to their cognizance. Their powers and duties, are, either by statutes, or by the decisions of common law, clearly defined. It is not within the province of these officers to interfere, till actual crime has been committed. Now, there are many things connected with the forestallment of crime, and many of the lesser crimes themselves, which are committed almost with impunity by the young children of our City, hardly old enough to know their evil, that need to be under the jurisdiction of some one. The statutes of the State are silent regarding them, and our School system is hardly old enough, and perhaps too much the creature of statute, to be recognized by common law. Have our School Committees or our teachers, any power as public officers, to provide for these cases? Have we, as a Committee, the right, for instance, to instruct our teachers, as we have done, in the thirteenth section of the first chapter of the Regulations of the Public Schools, as follows?

“To promote the well-being of their pupils, it shall be the duty of the instructors, as far as is practicable,

to exercise a general inspection over them, as well out of School as within its walls ; and on all suitable occasions to inculcate upon them the principles of truth and virtue."

What power does this Regulation give to the teacher ? Can he under it, without liability to an action for an unjustifiable assault, inflict proper punishment for an offence committed out of School ? Has the teacher of our Public Schools any more punitive power, than the teacher of Private Schools ? If this relation of the School to the Government is, as we have assumed, most certainly he has.

How far have School Committees, the power of expulsion from school, except for such crime, as will bring the offender within the police jurisdiction ? May they, as was done in another city, make a regulation, that no corporal punishment should be inflicted, for any cause, in any school, but that in case of insubordination, the pupil offending should be expelled from the school and deprived of its advantages ?

Now, if the object of Government in the establishment and continuance of our free schools, is its own preservation ; if it designs, by this means, to forestall crime, and to secure to all the children, within its jurisdiction, such moral and intellectual education as will make them ardent supporters of the institutions under which they live—has it not the right, and have not our tax-paying citizens the right, to require those, to whom the administration of our Schools is especially entrusted, to devise such methods, as will secure the ends and aims of our School system ?

One, and, perhaps, the principal design of our Schools, is to conquer, control, educate and save all such children as these ? Have the Committee a right to turn them into the streets to their own ruin, and the injury of the community ? Are they not bound to devise

means, either gentle or forcible, to keep such children under the good influences of school, in the hope of making them good citizens, at least till open crime shall render them unfit for the companionship of virtuous children?

SEPARATE SCHOOLS.

This view of the relation of the Schools to the Government, has its bearing in determining the expediency, and also the power of committees, in establishing and supporting at public expense, any schools except such as can be attended by all the children of our citizens.

This Board has been petitioned by the German population of this City to aid them, with the public money, in establishing and supporting separate schools for their children. In these schools, the German language was principally to be taught, and, judging from the elaborate "Prospectus" accompanying the petition, the whole character of the instruction was to be peculiarly German. The tendency of such schools would be, to preserve the nationality of the Germans, to make their children almost as much foreigners, as they themselves are, and to prevent, in a great degree, their obtaining that advantage over their parents, which should result from their being educated in the country, in which they are to live.

A strong effort has been recently made in some parts of our country, by our Catholic population, to withdraw a portion of the Public School money from the general fund, and appropriate the same to establish Schools distinctly for their own children, where their own peculiar religious tenets may be more prominently presented.

Moral and religious instruction is necessary to sound education. Our Schools will fail of producing the results expected of them, unless such instruction is there

given. Knowledge is indeed power, but unchristianized, it is often power to curse, as well as to bless. The ends of the government therefore require that religious instruction should be given in our Public Schools. Yet it must be remembered, that the relation of man to God, is a private, personal and sacred relation. It is usurpation in Government to interfere with this relation, except so far as is necessary, in its own proper administration, and in preserving inviolate the rights and privileges of all the governed.

It is the duty of School Committees to guard the religious instruction in our Schools, from degenerating into sectarianism, or becoming such, as to give to any Christian, whatever may be his religious tenets, just cause of complaint. The text should ever be, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and thy neighbor as thyself." To those, whoever they may be, who desire more specific sectarian instruction in the schools, or the establishment of distinct Schools for different denominations, the simple answer is, you must afford that instruction, and maintain those Schools yourselves; Government can support only those schools, and afford only that instruction, which is free and appropriate to *all* within its jurisdiction. Our Public Schools are free to the children of foreigners, equally with those of our own citizens. But the whole character of the instruction given, must be such and such only, as will tend to make the pupils thereof, American citizens, and ardent supporters of American institutions. The very moment the principle is infringed upon, and distinct exclusive Schools are established, for any specific purposes whatever, our School system, which has given to our country its strength, is broken up and its glory and usefulness departed.

What is yielded to one class of petitioners cannot with consistency be withheld from others; and the result

necessarily must be, that instead of a people, composed of representatives from almost every nation of earth, yet harmoniously acting together as citizens of a great Republic, and equally interested in maintaining her institutions and cherishing her glory—a people understanding each other's peculiarities, and mutually yielding to each other's prejudices, and all striving to accomplish the same great purposes,—we should soon have a people, composed of as many sections, as there are different nations and different denominations represented among us, all working against each other, each striving for their own aggrandizement, alike regardless of the common interests of the whole body of the community.

They whom a narrow faith divides, abhor each other. A house divided against itself cannot stand. Distrust, dissension and disunion would follow. Our Republic would share the fate of those which have perished before us, and another name would be added to the long list of failures in free government, which stain the pages of history, and shake our confidence in God and man.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE.

One other important consideration in this connection, and one that has, to some extent, engaged the attention of the Legislature and of the Community generally, is the power, and the expediency of exercising that power, which Government has, to compel those parents, who are regardless of the welfare of their children, or ignorant of their true interests, to send, at least a portion of each year, all their children, between the ages of five and fifteen, to some School.

No one questions the right of Government to punish, where crime has been committed. Has it not an equal right to punish those, who disregard the means it employs to forestall crime?

If one object of Government in maintaining our School System is to prevent the commission of crime, may it not compel its subjects to respect, as they do the other portions of its code, the laws regulating school attendance. The parent is not the absolute owner of the child. The child is a member of the community, has certain rights, and is bound to perform certain duties, and so far as these relate to the public, Government has the same right of control over the child, that it has over the parent.

It furnishes those means of education, which are calculated to prevent the child from becoming a burden to society and a pest to his fellow citizens. It gives to the child, when he shall have reached a certain age, the privileges of citizenship, and the right to exercise the elective franchise. May it not require him, to obtain such an education, as will prepare him intelligently to avail himself of these rights? And may it not punish the parent, who, without just cause, deprives the child of educational privileges? May not our tax payers say, with justice, we are taxed for the education of *all* the children around us, and we demand that those children should be brought within the jurisdiction of the Public Schools, from whom, through their vagrant habits, our property is most in danger, and who, of all others, most need the protecting power of the State.

Our Legislature in the years 1850 and 1852, passed certain penal laws respecting attendance at School, which were adopted by our City.* The proper offi-

* STATUTES OF THE COMMONWEALTH.

Act of 1850. Chapter 294.

SECT. 1. Each of the several cities and towns, in this Commonwealth, is authorized and empowered to make all needful provisions and arrangements concerning habitual truants, and children not attending school, without any regular and lawful occupation, growing up in ignorance, between the ages of six and fif-

cers were appointed, and the laws have been efficiently carried into operation.

The results have been very favorable to our Schools. The evil, however, is not as yet remedied. Yet perhaps no more stringent legislation can be carried into successful operation, till the community generally recognize the difference between Private and

teen years; and also all such ordinances and by-laws, respecting such children, as shall be deemed most conducive to their welfare, and the good order of such city or town; and there shall be annexed to such ordinances, suitable penalties, not exceeding for any one breach, a fine of twenty dollars: *provided*, that such ordinances and by-laws shall be approved by the Court of Common Pleas for the County, and shall not be repugnant to the laws of the Commonwealth.

SECT. 2. The several cities and towns, availing themselves of the provisions of this act, shall appoint, at the annual meeting of said towns, or annually by the mayor and aldermen of said cities, three or more persons, who alone shall be authorized to make the complaints, in every case of violation of said ordinances or by-laws, to the justice of the peace, or other judicial officer, who, by said ordinances, shall have jurisdiction in the matter, which persons, thus appointed, shall alone have authority to carry into execution the judgments of said justices of the peace or other judicial officer.

SECT. 3. The said justices of the peace, or other judicial officers, shall, in all cases at their discretion, in place of the fine aforesaid, be authorized to order children, proved before them to be growing up in truancy, and without the benefit of the education provided for them by law, to be placed for the periods of time as they may judge expedient, in such institutions of instruction, or houses of reformation, or other suitable situation, as may be assigned or provided for the purpose, under the authority conveyed by the first section, in each city or town availing itself of the powers herein granted.

Act of 1852. Chapter 283.

SECT. 1. Any minor between the ages of six and fifteen years, convicted under the provisions of an act entitled "an act concerning truant children and absentees from school," passed in the year one thousand eight hundred and fifty, of being an habitual truant, or of not attending school, or of being without any regular and lawful occupation, or growing up in ignorance, may, at the discretion of the justice of the peace or judicial officer having jurisdiction of the case, instead of the fine mentioned in the first section of said act, be committed to any such institution of instruction, house of reformation, or suitable situation, as may be provided for the purpose under the authority given in said first section, for such time as such justice or judicial officer may determine, not exceeding one year.

SECT. 2. Any minor convicted of either of said offences, and sentenced to pay a fine as provided in the first section of the act to which this is in addition, may, in default of payment thereof, be committed to said institution of instruction, house of reformation, or suitable situation provided as aforesaid, or to the county jail, as provided in case of non-payment of other fines. And upon proof that said minor is unable to pay said fine, and has no parent, guardian, or person

Public Schools, and understand more fully the peculiar province of the latter in the administration of the Government.

chargeable with his support, able to pay the same, he may be discharged by said justice or judicial officer, whenever he shall see fit.

SECT. 3. If any person so convicted be not discharged as aforesaid, he shall be discharged according to the provisions of the third section of the one hundred and forty-fifth chapter of the Revised Statutes.

SECT. 4. The powers of the justice of the peace or judicial officer, under this act and the act to which this is in addition, in all unfinished cases shall continue under any reappointment to the same office, provided there be no interval between the expiration and reappointment to said office.

SECT. 5. The third section of the act entitled "an act concerning truant children and absentees from school," passed in the year one thousand eight hundred and fifty is hereby repealed.

Act of 1852. Chapter 240.

SECT. 1. Every person who shall have any child under his control between the ages of eight and fourteen years, shall send such child to some public school within the town or city in which he resides, during at least twelve weeks, if the public schools within such town or city shall be so long kept, in each and every year during which such child shall be under his control, six weeks of which shall be consecutive.

SECT. 2. Every person who shall violate the provisions of the first section of this act shall forfeit, to the use of said town or city, a sum not exceeding twenty dollars, to be recovered by complaint or indictment.

SECT. 3. It shall be the duty of the school committee in the several towns or cities to inquire into all cases of violation of the first section of this act, and to ascertain of the persons violating the same the reasons, if any, for such violation, and they shall report such cases, together with such reasons, if any, to the town or city, in their annual report; but they shall not report any cases such as are provided for by the fourth section of this act.

SECT. 4. If, upon inquiry by the school committee, it shall appear, or if, upon the trial of any complaint or indictment under this act, it shall appear that such child has attended some school not in the town or city in which he resides, for the time required by this act, or has been otherwise furnished with the means of education for a like period of time, or has already acquired those branches of learning which are taught in common schools, or if it shall appear that his bodily or mental condition has been such as to prevent his attendance at school, or his acquisition of learning for such a period of time, or that the person having the control of such child is not able, by reason of poverty, to send such child to school, or to furnish him with the means of education, then such person shall be held not to have violated the provisions of this act.

SECT. 5. It shall be the duty of the treasurer of the town or city to prosecute all violations of this act.

ORDINANCE OF THE CITY.

SECT. 1. The City of Boston hereby adopts the two hundred ninety fourth chapter of the laws of the Commonwealth, for the year one thousand eight hun-

EXAMINATION.

It was with these views of the importance of our School System, and of the duties and responsibilities of School Committees and School Teachers, that your Committee undertook the examination of the Grammar Schools of this City. The regulation, under which we were appointed, requires that the Committee shall "critically examine the pupils of all the classes in all the studies, prescribed by the Regulations, in order to ascertain the condition of the Schools," &c. It was hardly to be expected, that the whole nine of the Committee should be able to devote the time necessary for so extensive an examination, and we, therefore, followed the precedent of former years, and divided the labor. Nineteen half days were devoted exclusively to the work. Every School was examined by the Chairman of the Committee, aided by the Superintendent of Public Schools, and generally by the members of the Examining Committee to whom the School under ex-

dred and fifty, entitled "An Act concerning Truant children, and absentees from school."

SECT. 2. Any of the persons described in the first section of said act, upon conviction of any offence therein described, shall be punished by fine not exceeding twenty dollars: and the senior justice, by appointment of the police court shall have jurisdiction of the offences set forth in said act.

SECT. 3. The house for the employment and reformation of juvenile offenders is hereby assigned and provided as the institution of instruction, house of reformation or suitable situation, mentioned in the third section of this act. [*Passed October 21, 1850.*]

This Ordinance was presented to the Court of Common Pleas for the county of Suffolk, at the October Term, 1850, and was approved by the Court. And at a meeting of the Mayor and Aldermen of the city, held on the thirty-first day of January, 1851, three officers were appointed in accordance with the second section of the statute, whose duty it is to attend to all cases of truancy reported to the Mayor, by the masters or Sub-Committees of the several schools. The reports of these officers disclose a series of facts, respecting a certain class of children in our city, which evidence the necessity of stringent laws, and their efficient execution.

amination was allotted, and, frequently, by such other members of the General Committee, as were able to attend. The first duty performed in each case, at every School, was a thorough examination of the building, from the cellar to the roof, together with the yards and outhouses, by all the Committee present. All the rooms in the various school-houses were visited by the Chairman, and by the Superintendent of Public Schools, and a short time spent with all the teachers and pupils. The remainder of the time, allotted to the School, was spent by the Chairman in the examination of the first class of the School, and by the Superintendent and the remainder of the Committee, in the examination of the pupils of the three remaining classes. Your Committee think, therefore, that they have been able to obtain generally a correct, intelligible idea, of the character and condition of our Schools, the diligence of the pupils, and the ability and faithfulness of the teachers; and it is with grateful feelings toward those teachers, who have labored so abundantly, in season and out of season, for the lasting good of our children, that we acknowledge ourselves to be agreeably disappointed. The character and amount of instruction given, but more particularly, the general aspect of the Schools, the general intelligence, the high moral tone, which seemed to pervade them all, assured us that our Schools were indeed doing a great work, in preparing the rising generation, to act well their part in life's great drama; and we often felt, in the course of our examination, that could every parent and every voter become more intimately acquainted with our Schools, by an experience like ours, they would more fully appreciate their advantages, and more cheerfully co-operate with the teachers and the Committee in all that tended to their advancement. There is, to be sure, a

great difference in the character of different Schools, caused partly by difference in pupils, difference in parents, difference in systems, difference in school buildings, and, also, difference in the ability, tact, and faithfulness of teachers. It is not, therefore, from particular Schools, but from the aggregate result of the examination of all, as it remains in our minds, that we form our opinion of the efficiency of the School System in this City. These differences, so far as they are under the control of the School Committee, have been growing less and less, and we trust that, with the judicious aid of our able and faithful Superintendent, they will soon disappear, so far as in the nature of things, their disappearance is possible.

We have six Schools exclusively for boys, seven exclusively for girls, and seven attended by both boys and girls. There are five Schools, upon the double-headed plan, with two masters each, the pupils changing rooms different parts of the day, and reciting to one master, in the studies of the Grammar department, and to another, in the studies of the Mathematical department. There are eleven Schools having one master, and reciting to him in all branches. There are four Schools having two masters, and having the pupils divided into two portions, each of which remains with one of the masters all the time, the pupils reciting to him and his assistant in all the branches. In some of these Schools there is a sub-master; in others, none. In some, there is one usher; in others, two; and in some of the Girls' Schools, there is no male assistant whatever.

In eight of these Schools, the pupils meet in two large rooms, each capable of holding some three hundred pupils, and recite by divisions, either in the same room, where other recitations are going on, or in small recitation rooms, which are added, in some instances, to the large rooms. In the remainder of the Schools, the pu-

pils meet in small rooms, capable of holding some sixty scholars, each division remaining constantly under the supervision of the same teacher. In these latter Schools, o u r have large halls, sufficient to accommodate all the pupils of the School, where they can meet together, with their teachers, at singing, and other general exercises, and receive the parents of the children and the friends of the School, at the public exhibitions. Others have no rooms sufficiently large to accommodate over some seventy or eighty persons, affording no proper place for exhibitions, and preventing the teacher from ever meeting all his pupils in one assembly. All these external inequalities in the Schools, necessarily affect their internal condition. Your Committee have thought it best, therefore, to enter into no specific comparison of the Schools, but to speak generally of the excellences and defects which have come under their notice, during their examination.

STUDIES.

READING.—We speak of Reading first, not only because it comes naturally first in time, but because we consider it, on the whole, the most important branch of study pursued in our Schools. Every one, whatever be his position, is liable to be called upon at any time, to read, both in public and private; and in many positions does a man's success in life, depend very much upon his capacity, or want of capacity, to express clearly, forcibly and understandingly the true meaning of the passages, which he is reading aloud. What so enlivens a winter evening fireside, as one of our classic poets, read by a mother or sister, whose mind has been disciplined by thought, whose heart has not become seared by fashionable follies, whose voice has been cultivated,

so that it gives with ease the full and correct sound to every combination of vowel and consonant, and insensibly changes its tones, to express the varied sentiments of grief, anger, love, pathos and humor, which the poet has "bodied forth."

The ability to read well is to some extent a gift, and all cannot attain it. The great difficulty with many, is the absence of quick perception in grasping at a glance, the idea of the whole sentence, so as to know it in their own minds, and feel it in their hearts, and therefore be able to seize insensibly the appropriate tones of voice, before they attempt to express its meaning to their listeners. Indeed, the chief cause of monotony and of poor reading generally, is the fact, that very often, the mind of the reader does not comprehend the thought of the author, nor his heart sympathize with the feeling expressed; and he reads therefore mere words, hardly attaching more meaning to them, certainly giving to them no more expression, than though they were of a foreign tongue.

There must be enthusiasm in the reader, to produce effect upon the hearer. Yet the noblest enthusiasm, the deepest feeling, and the highest appreciation of the thought, cannot alone make a good reader. The voice must be trained. The instrument must be in tune. The organs of speech must be so drilled, that they will habitually accommodate themselves, to the condition of the reader. There is much that is mechanical in reading, which every one may acquire, and without acquiring which, no one can read well. Thoughts are expressed by words, and he fails, who, for whatever reason, does not give full force to words, sounding each one distinct, yet as a unit made up of several elements. Feelings are expressed by tones of the voice, and he, who cannot insensibly

change his voice from one tone to another, fails in producing the legitimate effects of good reading.

Two persons, of the same natural musical talent, may play upon the piano-forte the same tune. The one, having comparatively but little practice, is obliged to give his whole attention to mechanical execution, in order that the proper notes may be struck in the proper time, and he performs the piece without positive fault, and yet affords but little satisfaction to his listeners. The other, a master of the instrument, who has practised upon the scales till the mechanical execution of the most difficult music requires of him but little thought, looks through the mere melody and rhythm of the music performed, to the theme upon which it is founded, and gives it such expression, that his hearers are often melted into tears. Now the voice is the instrument by which chiefly, we communicate thoughts and feelings to others; and accordingly as we are, or are not, masters of its powers, shall we be enabled to express effectually our own feelings and those of the author we read.

These two elements in good reading,—the mechanical and the intellectual,—are hardly kept enough distinct in the instructions in reading in our Schools. The mechanical part may and should be acquired chiefly by the pupils, when in the lower classes. For the organs of speech are more flexible in early years, and careless habits in pronunciation and articulation can then be more easily corrected, than when they have become confirmed by habitual practice. We were sorry to see in some of our schools, carelessness in this respect, occasionally on the part of teachers, often on the part of pupils in the younger classes, and sometimes among the pupils of the first class. For example, words ending in *ing*, pronounced without sounding the final letter,—words ending in *ess*, pronounced as

though spelled *iss*,—the letter *t* omitted in words like *subject* and *beasts*. We all know how difficult it is for one, who has not paid particular attention to articulation, to pronounce, for instance, the word *acts*, so that it can be distinguished, except by the context, from the word *axe*. Yet our language abounds in such difficulties; and they can only be met and conquered, by constant practice and watchfulness in early years.

We were gratified to find in some of our schools, different expedients adopted by the teachers, to secure to the pupils good articulation and ease in changing the tones of the voice. Sometimes a sentence was read backward, by a single individual or by the whole class, with special reference to giving every letter in every word its appropriate sound. Sometimes the words were spelled both forwards and backwards, by the sounds of the letters only. Again, words of a kindred nature, in which errors of pronunciation are likely to occur, were arranged in sentences for practice, or written upon the blackboard and slate, for the purpose of analyzing the difficulties and of pointing out the remedies for mispronunciation. For cultivating the different tones of the voice, sentences were selected from various authors, illustrating the various emotions and passions; or perhaps the same sentence was read, regardless of the sense, for the express purpose of exercising the voice upon the tones themselves.

There may be, perhaps, danger in this course, unless the teachers and pupils keep constantly in mind, that these exercises are merely a mechanical training of the voice. But in those schools where they were judiciously employed, the advantages were plainly marked, in the distinct articulation, the appropriate tones, and the expressive manner in which the pieces, selected by your Committee, were read by the pupils of the first class.

Much time is devoted to reading, in all our schools;

but we think no more than is advisable. Generally very successful results are obtained.

DEFINITIONS.—There was also a wide difference in the schools, in the ability of the pupils, to give correct definitions to the words, occurring in their reading lessons. In some Schools, Worcester's Comprehensive Dictionary was upon every pupil's desk, and the prompt replies showed the good use that had been made of it. We found in one School, a practice which we would recommend our teachers to pursue. In every reading lesson, a sentence was given out for definition, and every word was defined in course by the class; and thus, all those little common words, such as, *if, with, in, as, &c.*, of which, we all think we know the meaning, till we are called to define them, were considered by the pupils, their origin sought out, the manner shown in which, from being first verbs or nouns, they came to be employed as connectives, their appropriate uses taught, and also the relation which they sustain to other words in the language.

In order to test the discipline of mind of the pupils, their quickness of thought, and their power of discrimination, your committee gave certain words nearly synonymous in signification, to have pointed out the different shades of meaning, and also the connection in which they should respectively be used. Such words, for example, as *to see, to look, to perceive, to behold, to observe, to descry, to recognize, to gaze, and to stare*; or, of another class, such words as *intellect, genius and talent*. In some schools we received no, or very unsatisfactory, replies; in others, we were surprised at the accuracy exhibited, and generally were satisfied, that much more attention in our Schools is paid, than was formerly the case, to obtaining a correct understanding of the pieces read.

In regard to Spelling, we will but repeat what was said by the Committee of last year, that "there is ample room for improvement." We cannot suggest a practical remedy, but it is to be hoped that our teachers will devise some way, to make their pupils more universally correct in orthography. We do not intend to say that incorrect spelling is more common than formerly, but we do think that there has not been that improvement in this study, which we found in most others. We found the best spelling in those Schools, where the most attention had been paid to writing compositions and abstracts of lessons.

GRAMMAR.—The universal testimony of past Committees has been, that the technical part of Grammar has been thoroughly pursued in our Schools, and we have seen nothing in our examination which should cause us to express a different opinion. The frequent changes in the text-book have been unfavorable, but after all it is not so much the book as the teacher, that produces favorable or unfavorable results. Grammar, in its highest sense, cannot be understandingly pursued by the pupils in the lower classes. It is too philosophical in its nature, and requires a maturity and discipline of mind, and a reach of thought, far above their capacity. Yet much benefit may be derived from oral instruction, and particularly by watchfulness on the part of the teachers, of the language employed by the pupils in their recitations and conversations, and by care in correcting the various written exercises, in the daily routine of School duties. There are certain technical formulas, also, that must at some time be made familiar to the pupil, which at first cannot be fully understood, and may perhaps with profit, be committed to memory, by pupils of the second and

third classes. But it is hardly to be expected that any intimate knowledge of the science of Grammar or the philosophy of language, or any practical methods of applying principles and rules, in the construction of sentences, should be attained by the children, before reaching the first class. And even then, when we consider the comprehensiveness of the study, and the various anomalies, and idiomatic expressions in our language, we ought not to be surprised at occasional errors.

Many mature minds when called upon to give their idea—not a mere formal definition—but their *idea* of mood or case, or of a preposition or conjunction, find themselves puzzled to give any clear and intelligible answer. Often they have but a vague notion concerning them; and it is only by continued observation that they have learned to employ them correctly. The English language has, in its construction, much that is pure—that necessarily, from the connection between thought and its expression, must be found in it, as well as in all other languages. But it also has much, that is entirely arbitrary, clearly unphilosophical, and only rendered correct by the sanction of good usage.

In separating the pure from the arbitrary, and in striving to discover how it happens, that while human nature is substantially the same everywhere, the framework of languages is essentially different—in inquiring why (to give an illustration of a whole class of differences) we have in our language more parts of speech, but a less number of cases than the Latin language, all of which species of investigation is necessary to a thorough, logical knowledge of the Grammar of the English language, we open a field for thought and research, which can only be exhausted by years of study. It is not to be expected, therefore, that the

pupils of our Schools, should ordinarily acquire more than a ready method of analyzing the common forms of construction, an ability to understand generally the relation, which the different parts of speech in a sentence bear to each other, and an ease in expressing their own thoughts in correct language.

Generally, your Committee were abundantly satisfied with the proficiency manifested by the pupils, in these respects.

Many ingenious expedients were adopted by different teachers, to interest the pupils, excite their enthusiasm, and to awaken those habits of attention, which would cause them, in their daily exercises to avoid most errors, to understand the reason for many of the rules, and to learn the general principles regulating their exceptions. We have not space to mention them in detail. But we were satisfied, in the comparison of Schools, that those of our teachers who confine their instruction almost entirely to the *ipse dixit* of the text-book, would find their pupils benefited, by adopting such familiar expedients, as will make the study of Grammar more interesting to young minds. We would recommend more practice in writing familiar exercises.

WRITING.—The writing in the Schools we found generally good, but we do not think as much attention is paid to this branch of study, as its importance demands. There are constitutional differences in children, in regard to the ease with which they perfect themselves in penmanship. Some seem, almost naturally, to be good writers, while with others, to write handsomely seems almost an impossibility. We found the best writing in those schools, where the pupils wrote in unison and received their copy from the teacher, as he wrote, letter by letter, upon the blackboard before

them. In these Schools also, the writing of all the scholars was singularly uniform. We were surprised to find in some schools, very creditable specimens of map, landscape and portrait drawing, while the writing books of the pupils were comparatively poor. The former are well in their place, but they should not be cultivated at the expense of branches more practically useful.

ARITHMETIC.—The study of Arithmetic, with the exception perhaps of Reading and Writing, is more practically important, than any other upon our School list.

It may be pursued, either mechanically or intellectually. Its processes may be gone through, the method of solving a long series of problems may be, as it were, committed to memory by pupils, so that, parrot-like, they may *talk* a long and complicated explanation of them, and yet but little knowledge of the science of numbers be acquired, and still less, real, lasting, practical benefit obtained. If, however, it is taught as it should be, if the pupils are made to understand, how few and how simple are the general principles upon which it is based, how readily one step follows another in logical succession, how, from the constitution of things, its principles are universally applicable, not merely to the problems of a particular book, but to all kindred examples, that can be formed either in pure or in mixed mathematics; if the pupil is taught to distinguish that, which is pure, from that which is arbitrary, in our system of computation, or, to illustrate by a single example, that our system of notation by ten is entirely arbitrary, that any other number might have been selected for the basis, and then taught to follow out the consequences, which would result from such new basis, upon all numerical calculations, it becomes one of the most interesting branches

of study, and at the same time, one of the best means of disciplining many of the faculties of the mind.

Mental exercises should be more frequently given, to the pupils of our schools, in the four fundamental rules. For thus only, will the pupils be able to concentrate their thoughts upon the rationale of processes, without the trammel of thinking upon the mere mechanical part of computations. The accuracy and rapidity with which the pupils, even of the fourth class, in some schools, performed, mentally, long and complicated questions in Addition, Subtraction, Multiplication and Division, was, to us, a convincing proof, that much higher attainments in numerical computation may be reached, by the youngest members of our Schools, than some of our teachers seem to suppose. The examples, given as tests, to the first class, were generally, quickly and accurately performed, and, in many instances, a high degree of mathematical discipline was displayed, in the analysis of complicated problems.

With but few exceptions, the examination was highly creditable to the teachers and pupils examined, and perfectly satisfactory to your Committee.

GEOGRAPHY.—Geography is more universally well taught in our Schools, than any other branch of study. This is probably due, in a great degree, to the character of the study itself. It does not require that amount of thought, which is necessary for a complete mastery of most of the branches of study, pursued in our Schools. It appeals to the perceptive, more than to the reflective faculties. It exercises the memory, rather than the reasoning powers; and in children the memory is usually more, and the reasoning powers less active, than in adults. We listened with much interest, to the recitals

by many pupils, of their adventures, in imaginary journeys to different parts of the earth. Scholars would set out from some place in our own land, for instance, and travel, in imagination, over our own country or over some portion of the Eastern continent, mentioning the various bodies of land and water passed over, with the means of conveyance employed, giving a description of the principal places, through which they passed, and adding such remarks in regard to the habits of the people, the nature of the climate, the character of the productions, and subjects of a kindred nature, as was suggested to them by their studies, their reading, and by the familiar lectures of their teachers. The exercise was interesting, not only geographically, but also as showing the power of the pupil in expressing his thoughts fluently and intelligibly, and in employing correct language therefor. We were, also, shown many beautiful specimens of map drawing, executed by the pupils, some of which would have been creditable to professional artists.

HISTORY.—The amount of time necessarily consumed in the more practical branches of study, precludes that degree of attention in our Schools to the study of History, which its importance in some respects seems to demand. The text-book in use, goes over the history of all nations, embracing both ancient and modern. It is hardly more than a digest of facts, and cannot be studied with much profit, without either access to more comprehensive Histories, or much oral information from the teachers. We found, in some schools, a fair knowledge of the history of Greece and Rome, with but a limited acquaintance with the most important facts, in the history of our own country. As the study is so comprehensive, and the time that can be appropriated to it in

our Schools so limited, we would recommend that the details of History there taught, be those of our own country in preference to others, and that generally the study of History be pursued more in connection with Geography, than it now is. After a fair knowledge of the History of our own country is obtained, if the proficiency in other studies will allow of it, then some attention should be given to the principal events in Universal History, necessary to obtaining general ideas of the past and present condition of different nations.

We do not intend, by these remarks, to undervalue the study of General History. It is one of the most interesting, and when properly taught, one of the most important, of all studies. But it is impossible to learn everything in the brief time allotted for school days, and a knowledge of History may, better than of any other study, be acquired by the pupil after leaving school, in his general reading.

BOOK-KEEPING.—We found in our examinations, that very little attention was paid to Book-keeping. Few of the Sub-Committees ever inquire about this study in our Schools, and it is crowded out by the multiplicity of other branches. Many boys and girls leave our first classes, without any knowledge of the elements, even of single entry, and often without ability to write, in proper form, the simplest receipt. It is not advisable to spend much time in learning complicated systems, but a simple method of keeping accounts should be acquired by every pupil. But little time would be requisite for obtaining the necessary information and practice. It is one of the required studies, and it properly comes before the Sub-Committees for consideration, at their Quarterly Examinations.

PHILOSOPHY.—Considerable attention has been paid to the study of Natural Philosophy, and much benefit derived by the pupils, by the judicious use of the valuable apparatus furnished to the Schools, when they have commenced the study with a proper discipline of mind and with sufficient other information. We are led to infer from our examinations, that this study has been very useful in our Schools, in disciplining the minds of the pupils. Its natural tendency is to expand the mind of the child, to enlarge his views, and to give to him a logical idea of cause and effect. When the wonders and mysteries of nature are unfolded, so far as man can fathom them ; when the great general laws of nature are seen to be so few and so simple, the child insensibly begins to look beyond nature, to Him who created all things and holds them in the hollow of his hand. The study is valuable as a moral and intellectual discipline, as well as from the practical importance of the facts acquired and the principles investigated.

PHYSIOLOGY.—The time necessarily consumed in the thorough investigation of the required studies, has prevented much attention to the permitted studies. Algebra has been pursued to some extent in some of the Schools, and Physiology in others. The time of the boys can be devoted to other studies more profitably, than to Physiology. With the girls, however, it is somewhat different. As mothers, they will hereafter have much to do with the physical training of children. The strength of our constitutions depends much upon our treatment in childhood, and a violation of the laws of health then, is often followed by years of sickness, suffering and useless inactivity. Upon the bed of pain, it is to the watchful care, the delicate attentions and skilful nursings of woman, that we look for forbearance in our impatience, and relief

in our suffering. Such a knowledge of Physiology as should be obtained in our Schools, may be to her of much practical benefit.

HALLS.—Some of our school houses have no Halls connected with the buildings. Without enlarging upon this topic, we would merely say, that it is due to the teachers the pupils and their parents, that some place should be provided, where, at least once a year, at the annual examination, all may meet together; so that the teachers and pupils can show to their friends, their faithfulness and studiousness, and the parents be enabled to have visible evidence of the manner in which their children have been employed at our Schools, and of the character and amount of discipline and instruction which they have received. It is important that in the singing and other general exercises, the teachers should have an opportunity to meet all their pupils face to face. It arouses in the teacher a warmer enthusiasm, a deeper and more realizing sense of his responsibility, and incites him to renewed and more efficient effort.

The effect of such meetings is beneficial to the pupils generally. The upper and the lower classes mutually exert an influence, each upon the other. The members of the first class, feeling their responsibility as older pupils, and knowing the influence of their example, in all well conditioned Schools, strive to conduct themselves in such a manner, as will be gratifying to their teachers, creditable to themselves, and favorable to the reputation of the School of which they are members. The younger classes, sympathizing with their elders, and influenced perhaps as much by their example, as by the commands of their teachers, are incited to good works, and return to their separate rooms, after these meetings, better prepared to obey the general rules of the School, and to submit to

the authority of the teachers, to whom more especially they are subject. The expense required to furnish Halls for those of our schools now destitute of them, is comparatively small, and we trust, that they will soon be afforded.

Mr. James Robinson of the Bowdoin School, and Mr. Richard G. Parker of the Johnson School, have resigned their mastership during the past year. They have served long and faithfully in the City's service, and retire with the best wishes of all who know them.

The building in which the Johnson School has been kept for many years, has been found so unfitted for School purposes, that it is soon to be removed, and the City Government are making arrangements to erect a more suitable one, in its place. When this latter building shall be finished, it is proposed to surrender to the City the building now occupied by the Winthrop School, and to merge the two Schools in one. This will probably be accomplished by the commencement of the next School year.

We have now spoken of most of the subjects which have occurred to us in the course of our examination, and which we deem proper to be presented to this Board, and to the citizens generally. Had we time, we would enlarge more fully, upon the internal arrangements in our Schools, the methods of discipline, the character of the oral instruction, the effect of the general exercises, and upon the various expedients adopted, to interest the pupils in their studies, to excite in them a love for their School, and to establish in their minds and hearts those principles and feelings, which are best calculated to make them, hereafter, conscientious and energetic, in the performance of their daily duties.

In these particulars, the teacher finds full scope for the exercise of all his powers, and the differences in the

Schools, were more marked, in the activity of mind among the pupils, the interest manifested in the examination, and the general tone of feeling which pervaded the whole School, than in the character and amount of knowledge obtained from the mere study of the text books. The proverb is abundantly true, "that as is the teacher, so is the School." Teachers, in a great degree stamp their own individuality, upon the minds intrusted to their guidance. No class in our community have a higher mission than they. Our teachers generally realize their responsibility, and are faithful, enthusiastic, and, according to the power given them, successful in the performance of their duties.

For the Committee,

SAM'L W. BATES, *Chairman.*

GRAMMAR SCHOOLS.

Abstract of the Semi-Annual Returns. July, 1853.

SCHOOLS.	Boys.	Girls.	Total.	Average at- tendance last six months.	Seats.	Between 5 and 15.	Over 15.	Masters.	Sub-Masters.	Ushers.	Female As'ts.
Latin,	172	-	172	161.6	210	106	66	1	1	3	0
Eng. High, .	142	-	142	* 155	225	60	82	1	2	2	0
Normal, . . .	-	86	86	86	100	-	86	1	0	0	3
Model,	90	-	90	98	120	90	-	0	0	0	2
Bigelow, . .	-	359	359	317	438	336	23	1	0	0	7
Bowdoin, . .	-	581	581	480	560	524	57	2	0	0	10
Boylston, . .	450	246	696	601	774	691	5	2	0	1	9
Brimmer, . .	440	-	440	436	558	426	14	1	1	1	7
Chapman, . .	280	255	535	483.5	558	510	25	2	0	1	8
Dwight, . . .	349	260	609	576	670	587	22	2	1	0	9
Eliot,	591	-	591	591	640	584	7	1	1	1	9
Franklin, . .	-	417	417	412	731	400	17	1	0	0	9
Hancock, . .	-	625	625	608	672	-	-	1	1	0	11
Hawes, . . .	382	-	382	324	462	379	3	1	1	1	4
Johnson, . .	-	499	499	431.5	473	465	34	2	0	0	6
Lyman, . . .	308	331	639	566	670	616	23	2	0	1	10
Mather, . . .	315	296	611	536	560	603	8	2	1	0	8
Mayhew, . .	500	-	500	470	612	489	11	1	1	1	8
Phillips, . .	461	-	461	454	540	458	3	2	0	2	5
Quincy, . . .	634	-	634	638	732	619	15	1	1	2	10
Smith,	30	49	79	51	80	79	-	1	0	0	1
Wells,	-	518	518	405	488	505	13	2	0	1	6
Winthrop, . .	-	419	419	400	540	401	18	1	0	0	8
Totals,	5,144	4,941	10,085	9,280.6	11,413	8,928	532	31	11	17	150

* This return is made in July, when the attendance is small. The average for six months is in some instances greater than the number belonging to the school at the time of making the return.

LATIN SCHOOL.

In School Committee, August 2, 1853.

The Annual Examination of this School was conducted by the Sub-Committee, aided by the Superintendent of the Public Schools, on the 14th and 15th of July.

It was highly satisfactory. On the 16th of July, the public examination and exhibition took place, and justified the high reputation of the School.

The several changes, which were introduced into the regulations last year, have been tried and are believed by the Committee to have been improvements.

The age now required for admission is ten, instead of twelve years, as formerly; and the regular course of instruction has been extended from five to six years. Attention to English composition and to the study of the French language has been required, and the course of study of geography and mathematics has been extended.

The operation of these changes has been to increase the number of pupils in the School, making it larger than at any previous time during the last twenty-eight years. The present number of pupils is one hundred and seventy-two. A larger percentage of the class, whose regular course was finished on the 16th ult., has

entered college, than of any class for the last five years. The increased length of the course has allowed the introduction of the French language, and the additional attention to English composition, geography and arithmetic, without detracting at all from the thoroughness with which the dead languages have been taught. It is believed that these changes have met the approbation of the parents of the pupils, that a very desirable object has been attained by them, and that the results have been quite satisfactory to the instructors.

During the past year, a portrait of Benjamin Apthorp Gould, Esq., whose valuable services to the great cause of public instruction are remembered and appreciated in this community to a degree, which must be as gratifying as it is honorable to him, has been presented to the School and adorns the Hall.

Mural maps, illustrative of ancient geography, have been imported and are exposed to view in each of the rooms, and are valuable auxiliaries in the prosecution of that required study.

For the Committee,

J. T. STEVENSON.

ENGLISH HIGH SCHOOL.

In School Committee, August 13th, 1853.

In submitting the Annual Report required by the regulations of the School Board, the Sub-Committee of the English High School would respectfully represent, that throughout the year this School has been in a prosperous and healthy condition, quietly but successfully accomplishing the objects of its institution. A somewhat larger number than usual have left the School during the year, but from causes of an individual and private nature. Nothing has occurred to mar the harmony of the instructors, or the regular attendance and improvement of the pupils. The discipline of the School is good—paternal, but firm and efficient; and gratifying evidences are not wanting, of the kindness, respect and affection entertained by the pupils towards the teachers, all of whom are patient, persevering, assiduous and faithful in their duties. The School has been regularly examined every quarter, and on the 16th and 17th of July, the annual examination of the graduating class was held, and gave entire satisfaction to the Superintendent of the Public Schools, and such members of the Sub-Committee as could be

present. The annual exhibition was spirited and interesting; the original essays pronounced by members of the graduating class on that occasion, were well written, and in vigor of thought, correctness of sentiment, clearness and force of style, and as indications of a broad, generous mental culture, were highly creditable to the authors; and your Committee cannot but feel from the opportunities they have had of becoming acquainted with their characters and attainments, that the young men, whom the School this year dismisses from its charge, go forth well prepared intellectually and morally for the high duties of life, and an honorable participation in its enterprises and occupations.

Since the exhibition, the annual examination of candidates for admission to the School was held on the days appointed. Eighty-six candidates were examined, of whom nine were rejected—seventy-seven admitted, four of whom were conditioned on two studies. The examination was conducted in the way and upon the principles so fully set forth in the last annual report of your Committee—with this exception—that the excess over the requisite number of marks which a candidate obtained in one study, was allowed to counterbalance a failure to obtain the requisite number in other studies—especially if that failure was not great, and in a study requiring memory rather than thought, reason and judgment; and when the sum total of a candidate's marks exceeded the sum total of the required marks, he was admitted. For illustration—suppose 30 to be the requisite number for admission in arithmetic, 50 in grammar, and 40 in geography—120 in all. If a candidate had 35 in arithmetic, 58 in grammar, and only 32 in geography, he would have 135 in all—an excess of 15 above the sum total required; and was upon this principle admitted. This principle your

Committee believe is a correct one, and proper to be adopted. It covered the case of some twelve or fifteen of the candidates admitted. The nine rejected fell entirely below the requisite mark in all the studies in which they were examined. The four admitted on condition exceeded, in the sum total of their marks, the sum total required, but the deficiency was so great in two departments, that it seemed proper to require a further review of them.

Your Committee regard the recent examination of candidates for admission to the English High School, as highly satisfactory, both as regards the good condition of the Grammar Schools from which the candidates came, and the future progress of the High School.

Very respectfully submitted for the Committee.

S. K. LOTHROP, *Chairman.*

NORMAL SCHOOL.

The Sub-Committee of the Normal School, respectfully report,

That this School was examined on the 15th of July.

The Sub-Committee have much pleasure in expressing their satisfaction with the condition of the School, and with the progress that has been made by the pupils in the various studies during the year that has passed since its establishment.

The principal object aimed at for the first year has been a thorough review of the more important of the Grammar School studies. A review, however, is understood to mean something more than a mechanical repetition of the common text-books. Each subject is studied by itself and in its connection with the other branches of the course, and each pupil is required to be so thoroughly conversant with any given subject as to be able to explain it clearly to the class, and capable of instructing others in the principles on which it depends.

The methods adopted by the teachers to obtain this result, have been very successful. Many of the pupils exhibit a high degree of proficiency, and some of them are already considered competent to do good service as teachers in our schools.

The course of study for the ensuing year will be more extended, new branches will be taken up, and more of

direct instruction given in the best methods of teaching. The pupils will also have more opportunities than heretofore, for observation and practice, in the Model School.

It will be a subject for future consideration whether the present allowed term of study may not be advantageously increased to three years for such pupils as wish to remain more than two years in the School. The experience of another year will determine what course it may be best to pursue in this respect.

The second annual examination of candidates for admission to the School, was held on the 28th of July. The whole number of applicants was sixty-three. Of these, a large proportion passed a very satisfactory examination, and were admitted unconditionally. Ten of the number were more or less deficient in certain studies, but were admitted on condition of applying themselves particularly to those studies during the vacation, and but three applicants were entirely rejected. This result must be considered as an evidence of good previous instruction in our Grammar Schools.

The Sub-Committee would however remark, that sufficient attention does not appear to have been paid to the important subject of arithmetic in some of our schools for girls. More of the candidates failed in this branch than in any other, and some of those who passed a very good examination in other studies, were deficient in their knowledge on this subject. It is essential that those who are preparing to be teachers should be early and thoroughly instructed in the elementary branches.

In addition to the number of sixty now admitted, it is probable that from ten to fifteen new pupils will enter the School in September, making in all more than seventy pupils. Of the last year's class, more

than eighty remain in the School. The whole number of pupils therefore for the ensuing year, will exceed one hundred and fifty.

The Model School connected with the Normal School is in excellent condition, so far as the instruction given to the pupils is concerned, and your Committee believe that the classes will compare favorably with those of the same standing in any of our Grammar Schools. The number of pupils however is not so large as the rooms will accommodate, and it is recommended that in future, pupils of the standing of the third and fourth classes of the Grammar Schools be admitted to this School, instead of those of the fourth class alone, of which it is at present composed.

For the Sub-Committee,

LE BARON RUSSELL, *Chairman.*

August 2d, 1853.

